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EDITORIAL NOTES.

Dishonesty and incompetence thrive only in the dark of general ignorance; the light of publicity wilts these noxious weeds.

MEDICAL ILLUMINATION Medical schools are getting publicity a-plenty in these days, and the month of June was rather an unfortunate one for a number of them. From two distinct sources came publicity in large quantities. The Council on Medical Education of the A. M. A. published its long-promised report indicating the relative standing of schools and pointing out directly those that should have no recognition without complete reorganization. The report of the Carnegie Foundation on Medical Education, made after a most careful examination of every medical school in the United States and Canada, by Abraham Flexner, was also issued in June, and is a monumental work so full of truths and so pregnant with food for thought that it will be eagerly read and its facts earnestly considered by all who are interested in medical teaching or medical progress. The "General Considerations" of medical schools in California will be found reprinted on another page of this issue of the JOURNAL, and are well worth careful reading. The frankness of the expressions descriptive of the conditions found in each school is at times startling, though undoubtedly true. "The school is a disgrace to the state whose laws permit its existence." "The school has no laboratory worthy of the name." These expressions refer to two schools in California.

Florence Nightingale is dead at the age of ninety; fifteen years of suffering, during which time she has hardly left her bed, ended a remarkable career.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. Once in a long while a character is found strong enough to cope with some great problem. Such an one necessarily possesses uncommon zeal, energy and determination, the gift of presenting arguments so as to convince others, the faculty of organizing, the tenacity which brooks no discouragement, the courage which comes from perfect faith in one's calling. There has been much maudlin sentiment concerning this great English woman, but there was not a bit of it in her character. She acted promptly at a time when her services to her country were most needed. Her position was so peculiar, and she departed so radically from the confines of custom, that her labors attracted universal attention and her deeds were heralded throughout the civilized world. Her ascension to popular favor was meteoric and the short duration of her great active work has hardly a parallel in history. This activity was crowded into a period of twenty-one months.

It is difficult in this day to form a conception of the conditions which confronted her and which, in her brief campaign, she did so much to remedy. Those who remember the coarse, vulgar picture which Dickens draws of the English nurse "with her layings out and her lyings in" will have some conception of the task she was to perform. She found the women, who worked in the hospital wards of England, the lowest and most degraded types; rough and uncouth, dirty in language and person, and nearly always drunk,—the very dregs of the city. Such was the stigma attached to the occupation of nursing that no woman of decency dared, or cared, to enter the work.

Florence Nightingale came from a wealthy and influential family. Born in the Italian city on the banks of the Arno, she received from it her name, and with the name went its warmth and glow and sunshine. Her father gave her what in those days was considered a masculine education, but his daughter remained essentially feminine. After her bow to the Queen she entered the whirl of the London season, but, soon tiring of social gaieties, she cast about for more serious employment. Several illnesses in her own family resolved her to take up nursing and to create of it a profession. She found, after long search, some ardent souls in a little Lutheran institution on the Rhine, and here she remained some months, later supplementing this training by observation of the work of the Catholic sisters in Paris. She brought back her knowledge to London and began a life of active philanthropy.

War was declared between Great Britain and Russia in 1854, and both France and England threw

thousands of troops into the Crimea to protect Turkey against Russian aggression. The battle of Alma brought terrible losses and suffering to the English forces. William Howard Russell, the *Times* war correspondent, stirred the apathy of England by his masterly appeal. "The wretched beggar," he wrote, "who wanders about the streets of London in the rain leads the life of a prince compared with the British soldiers who are fighting out here for their country. Are there no devoted women among us, able and willing to go forth and minister to the sick and suffering soldiers of the East in the hospital at Scutari? Are none of the daughters of England, at this extreme hour of need, ready for such a work of mercy?" The country was thoroughly aroused, and the War Office was inundated with food, provisions and hospital stores, and applications for nurses from women of all classes. Sidney Herbert, the Secretary of War, was a close friend of Florence Nightingale, and his strong appeal to her to take charge of this work is a great document in British history. She accepted the charge immediately, and, after one week of preparation, left England at the head of a little band of thirty-eight nurses, ready to battle with a death rate of fifty-five per cent in the hospitals of Scutari, crowded to overflowing with wounded soldiers and lacking in food and the most common necessities of hospital régime. In the twenty-one months which followed, the "Superintendent of the Nursing Staff in the East" worked indefatigably. She came back to England an invalid.

At a dinner given to veterans of the war in the Crimea it was suggested that each guest write upon a slip of paper the name of the person whose services in the Crimean war would be longest remembered by posterity. When the papers were examined, each bore the name "Florence Nightingale." The enlisted man can never forget her services to him. "Wherever a British soldier treads her influence is felt, and will be eternal." But this marvelous influence which she exerted was not to remain in old England alone. It has penetrated into every civilized portion of the globe. Her self-sacrifice and the remarkable example which she set, cannot be forgotten. She established the profession of nursing and no cult has ever had for its founder such a heroine. She injected into her calling that deep sense of duty which will ever characterize it. Women who now wear the garb of nurse with dignity and honor owe it to the lofty traditions which she inculcated. She gave to nursing an individuality which marks it as a distinct line of work, and she commanded for it a respect which will be lasting.

R. R.

Nowadays one does not go far in any line of activity without co-operating with his fellows. It is no less so in medicine.

CO-OPERATION IN WORK.

Through co-operative effort the physicians of this state, through the State Society, are now able to defend themselves properly and effectively against blackmail in the guise of malpractice suits, at a cost so low as to be almost ridiculous. With the benefits that the development of co-operation

among medical men—the County and State Societies—now brings, it should not be long until every licensed physician in the state, who is eligible, is aiding in this co-operative effort and sharing in its benefits. The reverse of benefits accrue if instead of co-operation we have antagonism, envy and all uncharitableness. Poor incomes mean poor doctors, and the people who try to decrease physicians' fees really injure themselves; co-operation has in no small part checked the tendency to lowering of fees and in many sections has absolutely eliminated the contract and lodge practice pest. Further co-operation can eliminate it nearly everywhere. Just criticism is always good and advantageous; mere knocking always retards or takes away from the advantages of co-operation. Emulation is inspiring, but envy is a ton weight on the neck of him who carries it. But apathy is the deadliest of all enemies to co-operation and improvement; the "what's the use" attitude will well-nigh kill all ambition and enterprise. Criticize where you see something to criticize; but don't knock. Help your fellow physicians and your society, and you not only help yourself but you help the people under your charge. If a brother physician is eminently successful and you are not, do not waste your time in vain envy, but study to see where you fall short and emulate. Remember that "a smile in the heart is the secret of youth," and that a sour face grows nothing but grouches. This is partly apropos of a letter from Dr. Mattison sent to the various county society secretaries, asking for aid in getting proper support for the Public Health Commission of the state; the letter will be found on another page.

A member has written the JOURNAL calling attention to an effort now being made to separate some dollars from physicians in this state. The "Empire Life Insurance Co." of Seattle has at least one agent who is visiting physicians with the plausible line of conversation suitable to the case, and trying to sell them stock in the company as a preliminary to being appointed one of the company's physicians. Inquiry at the office of the Insurance Commissioner discloses the fact that the "Empire Life Insurance Co." is not licensed to transact business in California. Some honors are considered, by some people, to be worth paying money for. But does it seem to be very much of an honor to be appointed physician to a company that is not licensed to transact business in our state? It would hardly appear to be either much of an honor or a business arrangement at all likely to be profitable. The same company has been operating in the same way in New York and probably in other states, and it is not unlikely that an occasional unwary doctor has been found who was caught by the "get-in-on-the-ground-floor" line of talk, if not by the honor of being a medical director or assistant expert of one sort or another—*when the company began doing business*. Don't take stock in companies like this without fully investigating the whole proposition—and then think about it some more.